

Breeding Affection

Local dog breeder mixes competition with courtship

By KEITH L. MARTIN

For Anne Bowes, a win at the Westminster Dog Show is nice, but success in finding the right dog for the right family is much sweeter.

For the last 37 years, Bowes has bred and trained

Pembroke Welsh corgis to the point where after 60 litters of puppies, she considers herself the Picasso of pooches.

"With breeding, it's like being an artist but rather than working in wood or charcoal, I work with chromosomes and

genes," said the Harden Hill resident. "Plus, what I work on gives you a kiss when you're all done."

The artist discovered her muse at age 21, as Bowes walked the balcony of the old
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Harden Hill's Anne Bowes with mom Alice and son Hatter, two of the corgis she breeds and trains at her Heronsway kennel.

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Madison Square Garden at her first Westminster Dog Show and said spying corgis and the competition was "like walking into the rest of my life."

"I saw the corgis and they stood by themselves and it looked like their owners weren't doing a thing," she said. "I loved big dogs, but I knew if I went big, I couldn't have as many, so I went with the corgi. They have a big dog personality in a small package and are very intelligent."

Used by the Welsh as herding dogs and farm guardians, corgis are "long and low," said Bowes, and dwarf-like with their large head and smaller body.

Among the puppies Bowes has helped breed is Betsy,

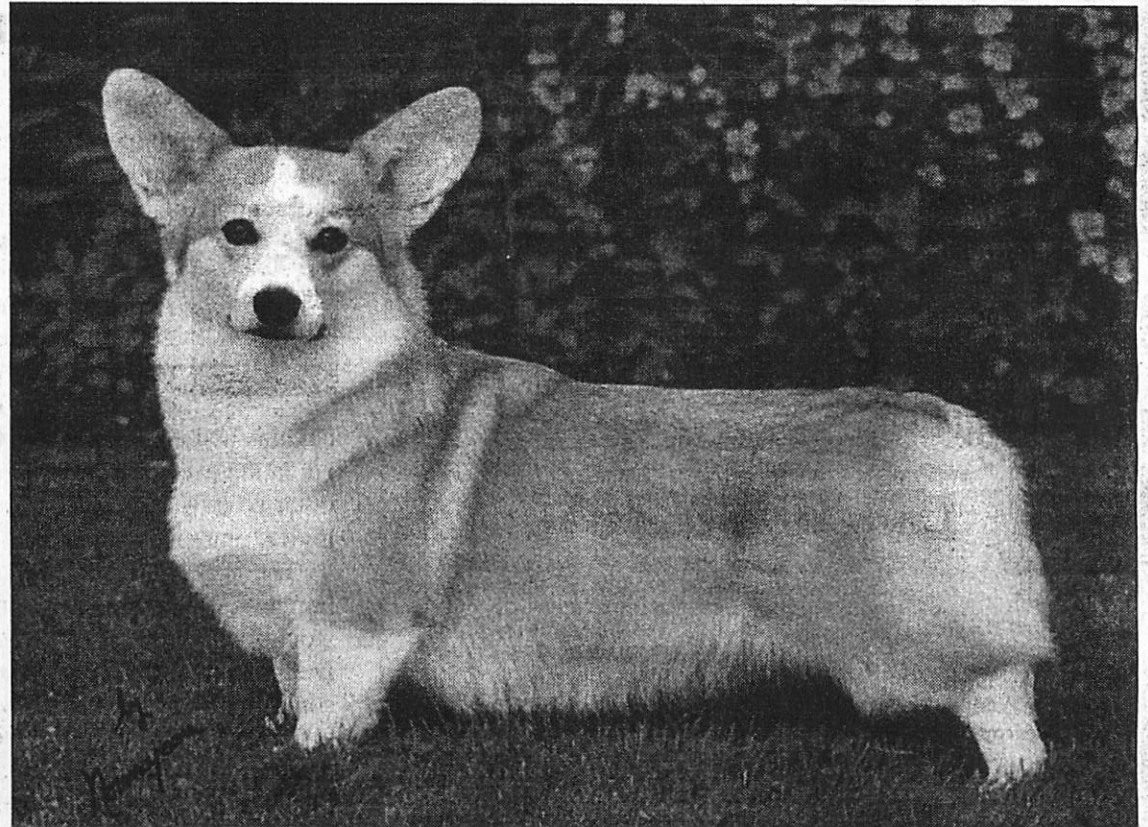
among the 12 Pembroke Welsh corgis also vying for the top spot.

Betsy's first big show did not go off without a hitch, however, said Bowes.

"The problem with corgis is that they go through hair cycles and they shed for about six to eight weeks," said Bowes. "You can only show when they are 'in-coat'...and since the show was one week later this year, we came really close."

While Betsy lost a little hair during her trip to New York, she did come home a winner, much to the delight of the Davies and Bowes.

"We trained a lot, but Betsy is primarily a pet and had never been to the big city and when we got in the ring, she was a little nervous, but not



circles as Champion Herons-
way Patriot's Dream, born on
Patriot's Day, 2002. The
corgi is co-owned by Bowes
and Lake Placid, NY couple
John and Pam Davies.

"The Davies came to me a
year before [Betsy's birth] and
told me they only wanted a
pet," said Bowes, who's lived
in Duxbury for 29 years.
"They were so wonderful that
I let them have a choice of a
show puppy anyway."

As Betsy grew, said
Bowes, the Davies changed
their minds and inquired more
about showing their corgi at
competitions, to the point of
taking handling classes them-
selves to get involved. Bowes
began to train Betsy, and a
short time later the corgi
began an impressive winning
streak, taking top honors at
two specialty shows, topping
80 other corgis to be named
best of breed.

With lots of training and
mounting wins, Bowes sug-
gested to the Davies that
Betsy take the next step in her
competitive career:
Westminster.

"I've shown at
Westminster many times and
took home five awards of
merit in five years," said
Bowes. "I returned this year
for the first time in three years
and it really is a cut above all
other dog shows. It's the
Hollywood version of dog
shows."

If Westminster is
Hollywood, then Betsy was
deemed a star, taking home an
award of merit (third place)

unsettled," said Bowes. "The
adrenaline made me move my
hand a little more than I
should, but she did fine and
showed well...beating best in
show dogs and well-heeled
dogs. Betsy did great for our
little home-bred dog."

As thrilling as Westminster
was, however, nothing brings
a bigger smile to Bowes' face
than breeding a dog and then
finding the puppy a loving
home, for show or for play.

"I love holding that puppy
in my hand, raising it, training
it and then having a judge
point to it and say 'first
place,'" she said. "You love
to see other people admire
your work...and also raise
pets for families or children."

Bowes takes her work find-
ing the right home for the lit-
ters she breeds very seriously,
meeting prospective parents
beforehand to get a feel for
what pup matches each family.

Saying she gets goose
bumps from showing, but a
warm feeling in her heart from
matching families and pup-
pies, Bowes said that the
Beatles have it all wrong.

"What I do on a daily basis
is raising dogs and finding a
family where they can provide
years of love," she said.
"Who says 'you can't buy me
love'? If I do my job right, I
can provide love for people."

The best customers, she
added, are the youngest ones.

"I love when a child grows
up and says 'I had the best dog
growing up,'" said Bowes.
"That is just as thrilling as
winning."

Betsy finished third among 12 Pembroke Welsh corgis at the Westminster Dog Show last
month.

Photo courtesy of Normajean